

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 236809 TOSEC 270680

FOLLOWING REPEAT HONG KONG 11094 ACTION SECSTATE, INFO OKINAWA,
PEKING, SINGAPORE, TAIPEI, TOKYO, CINCPAC DTD 22 SEP 76.

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 11094

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: ANOMALIES IN PEKING BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

REF: PEKING 1880

1. ALTHOUGH HIGHLY TENTATIVE, SEVERAL RECENT VARIATIONS IN
NORMAL CHINESE BEHAVIOR MAY INDICATE PROBLEMS AT THE CENTER.
USLO HAS ALREADY REPORTED THE UNUSUAL TREATMENT BEING GIVEN
TO NEW ZEALAND'S FORMER PRIME MINISTER AND SENATOR MANSFIELD'S
PARTY, SENDING THEM FIRST TO THE PROVINCES, APPARENTLY DESIGNED
TO DELAY THEIR ARRIVAL IN PEKING. NORMAL PRACTICE WOULD BE
FOR BOTH PARTIES TO PROCEED DIRECTLY TO PEKING WHERE ITINERARIES
WOULD BE DISCUSSED AND MEETINGS WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS HELD.
IN ADDITION, SOME FIVE DAYS AFTER THE LAST PUBLIC VIEWING OF
MAO AND FOUR DAYS AFTER THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES, THE CHINESE
LEADERSHIP HAS YET TO ANNOUNCE THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF
THE CHAIRMAN'S REMAINS. THIS HAS ALREADY GENERATED
SPECULATION IN THE PEKING AND HONG KONG CHINA-WATCHING
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COMMUNITIES.

2. FURTHER ADDING TO THE SOMEWHAT UNEASY FEELING ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN THE ABSENCE FROM PUBLIC VIEW OF ALL THE TOP POLITBURO SINCE THE SEPTEMBER 18 FUNERAL. ALTHOUGH STILL A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED SOME LEADERSHIP APPEARANCES, IF ONLY TO RE-ENFORCE AN ATMOSPHERE OF NORMALCY IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF MAO'S DEATH. WE ALSO HAVE NOTED THE SINGLE CONDOLENCE MESSAGE TO THE DPRK (NCNA SEPTEMBER 21) SENT BY UA KUO-FENG, REPRESENTING BOTH THE PARTY AND STATE. NORMALLY, PEKING WOULD SEND EITHER SEPARATE MESSAGES OR A SINGLE MESSAGE WITH JOINT SIGNATORIES ON SUCH AN OCCASION, AND NPC VICE CHAIRMAN WU TEH WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN A LOGICAL CHOICE.

3. WE CERTAINLY DO NOT WANT TO OVERREAD THESE VERY EARLY INDICATORS, AND WE ASSUME THAT THE LEADERSHIP WOULD, OF NECESSITY, BE ENGAGED IN A SERIES OF HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS AT THE PRESENT TIME. NEVERTHELESS, PEKING'S FAILURE TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON NORMAL PROCEDURES AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCURE IS WORTH WATCHING.

CROSS UNQTE: ROBINSON

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